

2008 Best Practices Conference Series

FOCUS on Bay Area Housing

June 5, 2008

Gaia Arts Center, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley

At this year's FOCUS on Bay Area Housing, a diverse group of housing officials, planners, professionals, and advocates gathered to hear housing experts discuss where the market is heading and when it could recover, how to make affordable housing a viable reality, and what new policies and regulations are emerging at the state and regional level.

The opening speaker was Joseph Perkins, President & CEO of Home Builders Association of Northern California. Speakers that followed included Dixie Baus Director of Affordable Housing with the Core Companies and Linda Wheaton Assistant Director of California Department of the Housing and Community Development. Association of Bay Area Government (ABAG) Staff released the annual **Housing Production Survey** which tracks Bay Area housing production by housing permits issued in the previous year. ABAG's **Third Annual Housing Report**, which documents the Bay Area's Regional Housing Needs Methodology and Allocation process and the new resource **Housing Element Tool Kit** were also distributed. The featured presentation "The Winds of Change" was given by Don Weden, former planner for Santa Clara County.

Welcome

Henry Gardner, ABAG, Executive Director

[Annual Housing Report & Survey](#) - Christy Riviere, ABAG Senior Planner

Current Housing Market

Joseph Perkins, President, Home Builders Association of Northern California

[New Housing Element Toolkit](#)

Jennifer Krebs, ABAG Senior Planner

Developing Affordable Housing in a Difficult Market - Dixie Baus, Director of
Affordable Housing, The Core Companies

State Housing Policy: What's On the Horizon – Linda Wheaton, Assistant Deputy
Director, CA Department of Housing & Community Development

Winds of Change - Our Critical Need to Become Intelligently More Urban, Don
Weden, former Planner, Santa Clara County

Wrap-up

JoAnna Bullock, ABAG Conference Manager

[Detailed Agenda](#)

[Speaker Bios](#)

[Conference Proceedings](#)

June 5, 2008 - FOCUS on Bay Area Housing

Conference Proceedings



Opening Presentation
Joseph Perkins, President & CEO
Home Builders Association of Northern California

In his candid remarks about the current housing market, Joseph Perkins called attention to the headline of the morning newspaper - "Housing Sector Deteriorates" - commenting that Bay Area housing is a very timely topic. He stated despite the dramatic decrease in home price, homes in the Bay Area are no more affordable due to lenders reluctance to give loans and that availability of loans, not inclusionary zoning policy, is the most significant determinant of affordability. He offered encouragement stating that he believes the housing market has reached near bottom – and that perhaps as soon as next year, home values will rise again. He believes in the foreseeable future property values in the Bay Area will increase over time as they have in the past. He concluded the key to the housing market recovery rests with the recovery of the lending market.



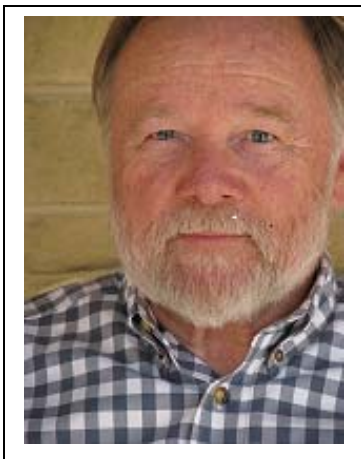
Dixie Baus
Director of Affordable Housing
The Core Companies

Dixie Baus illuminated the challenges of building affordable housing in the current market. She likened present conditions to "the perfect storm" pointing out that while California's economy is expanding and its population growing, the inventory of market rate and affordable multi-family housing is not keeping up. She stated that despite the current downturn in the housing market, affordable housing is still being constructed, but noted such projects are more expensive now because of fewer funding sources. Ms. Baus echoed Mr. Perkins sentiment regarding current lending issues stating that the market will improve when lenders resume regular lending practices.



Linda Wheaton
Assistant Deputy Director, Housing Policy Division
California Department of Housing and Community
Development

Linda Wheaton provided an overview of the current housing policy and legislation that is being implemented at the state level, including recent housing grant award programs, such as the Blueprint Planning Program and the HCD Housing Bonds (Proposition 46 and Proposition 1C funds). She emphasized the importance of land use in the development of strategies to help us reach GHG reduction goals set forth in AB 32.



Don Weden
Former Planner
Santa Clara County

Don Weden discussed the importance and urgency of thinking more deeply and creatively about the future of our communities than typically occurs in local land use dialogues related to density and traffic. He addressed major obstacles to the kinds of higher density development we will need in order to effectively meet the significant challenges rapidly heading our way.



ABAG Staff Christy Riviere presented the newly released **San Francisco Bay Area Housing Needs Plan, 2007-2014** and the results of the **Housing Production Survey**. The 2008 report is the third

annual housing report, building on **A Place to Call Home: Housing in the San Francisco Bay Area**. It includes targets for 2007-2014, established as part of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation process and provides in-depth explanation of the methodology used to determine housing allocations.

ABAG Staff Jennifer Krebs introduced the resource Housing Element Toolkit. Now available at www.abag.ca.gov/planning/toolkit, the toolkit offers a variety of tips and guidelines to jurisdictions updating their housing elements. It is designed to be a resource to help government staff as they work their way through the update process. The goal is to provide a single location for accessing existing resources.

Sponsors: Bay Area Council Urban Land Institute Non Profit Housing of Northern California
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